

WEIRD! FANTASTIC! ASTOUNDING!

BAFFLING

JAN.

10c

MYSTERIES

AARRGH! RUN, LOIS...
OR THIS MAN-EATING PLANT
I'VE GROWN WILL STRANGLE
YOU TOO!



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Here is the Perfect
CHRISTMAS GIFT

Under the President,
Under the Friends.

Many I see take and consider
many things as every day, not even
after some may seem to understand.
Others have such many a hard time

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4. Show it to 'The beautiful, whiskers whisking, taste-buds-just-put-to-test-and-confirmed-as-great-as-it-is-and-all-in-the-best-thing.' Show for the first time that you have this beauty, and let everyone you know, taste it and enjoy the taste. If the taste is good, then the product is good. As another saying of mine: "Goodness and beauty are inseparably connected in the creation." -George Ade

4. You will be asked to sign your name and address on the change of address card. This card will be forwarded by the Army Publishing Service to the Bureau Agents to be sent from the Signal Cavalry Service to receive "Waged and Wound" for injuries. Your names and addresses will remain under the sending, retaining influence of the service, and may be used as the target would conveniently aiding guides toward the recovery of the recovered patient. The Army will not accept any other address card, and will not accept any other address card, all attempts to receive "Waged and Wound" for injuries. For those Army post, for all who were over 40

ANSWER TO HOGGETT'S QUESTIONS

ANSWER: **WATERMELON** (see, line 396-9)

100 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10006

Dark horse

• 100 •

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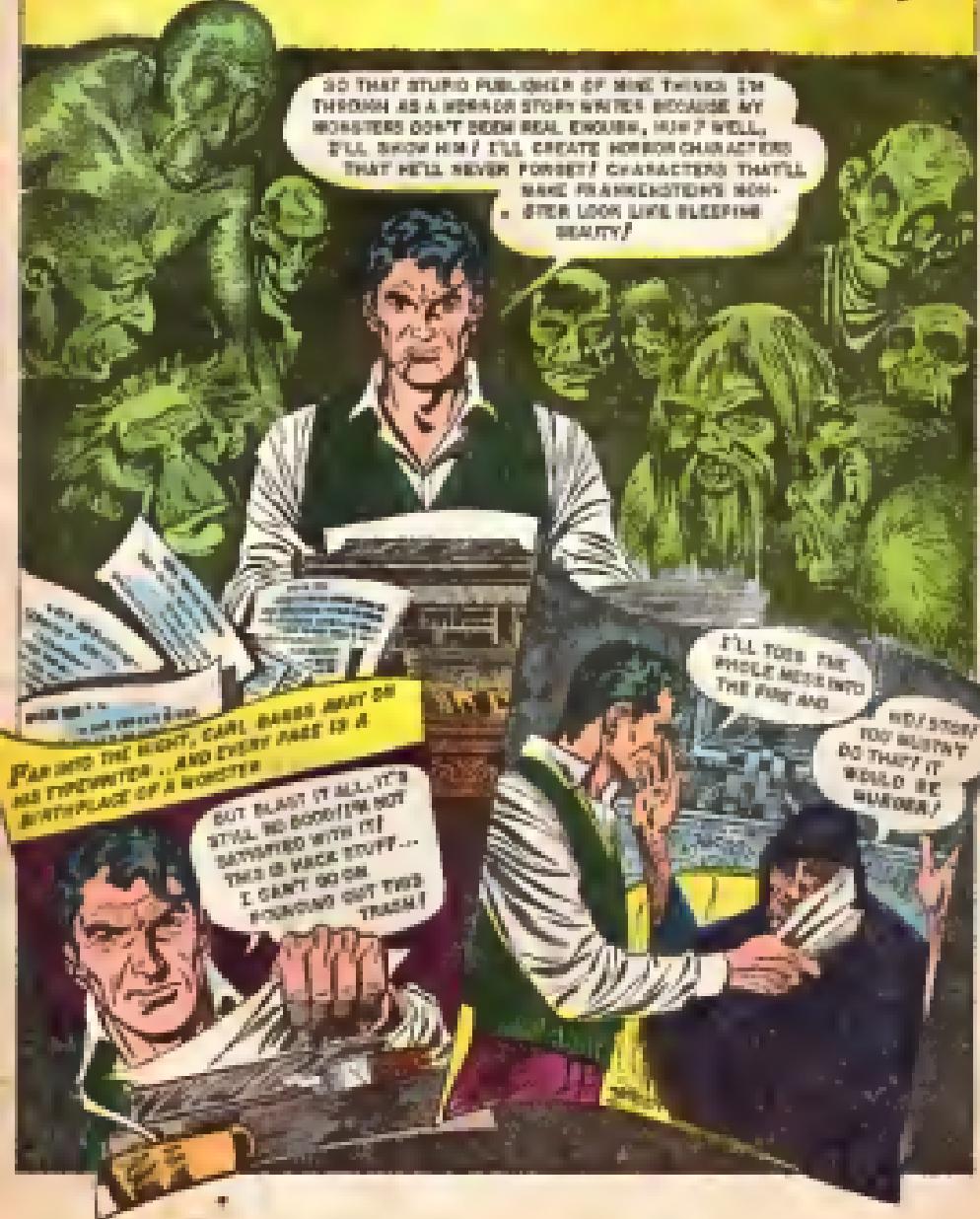
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OUT OF THE BEYOND, WITH SILENCE, SHOUTLESS STOPS, COMES A MACHINIC PROGRESSION OF CREATURES SO
BESPOKE THEY COULD STRIKE FEAR IN THE DEVIL! THEY GATHER AROUND CARL BASSON, THE FAMOUS
MASTER OF HORROR STORIES, AND WATCH WITH GRIM SUSPENTION AS HIS TWISTED IMAGINATION GIVES
BIRTH TO MORE OF THEM. ONLY YET, CARL BASSON IS THIS CREATOR? CARL BASSON IS...

the MONSTER MAKER

SO THAT STUDIO PUBLISHER OF MINE THINKS I'M
THEIRM AS A HORROR STORY WRITER BECAUSE MY
MONSTERS DON'T LOOK REAL ENOUGH, HUH? WELL,
I'LL SHOW HIM! I'LL CREATE HORROR CHARACTERS
THAT HEUL NEVER FORGET! CHARACTERS THAT'LL
MAKE FRANKENSTEIN'S MON-
STER LOOK LIKE SLEEPING
BEAUTY!



HOLY CHILDREN! I-E MUST BE SEEIN' THINGS! THIS—THIS CAN'T BE REAL!

I'M AS REAL AS YOU'VE MADE ME ON PAGE SEVEN OF THAT SCRIPT YOU WANT TO BURN!

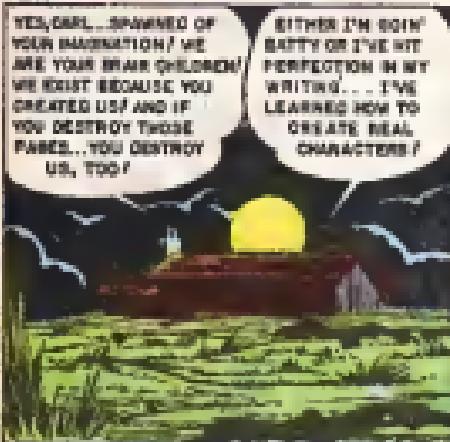
AND LOOK... THERE ARE ALL THE OTHERS YOU'VE CREATED ON YOUR PAGES!



YOU, CARL... SPAWNED OF YOUR IMAGINATION! WE ARE YOUR BRAIN CHILDREN! WE EXIST BECAUSE YOU CREATED US! AND IF YOU DESTROY THOSE PAGES... YOU DESTROY US, TOO!

EITHER I'M GOIN' BETTY OR I'M THE INT. PERFECTION IN MY WRITING... I'VE LEARNED HOW TO CREATE REAL CHARACTERS!

I'LL FIND OUT IF THIS IS FACT OR FICTION BY TOSING ONE OF THESE PAGES OF MY SCRIPT INTO THE FIRE!



FIVE SHOTGUN SHEETS OF PAPER... AND IT BURSTS INTO FLAME...

AND AT THE SAME TIME ONE OF THE CREATURES IS SuddenLY ENVELOPED IN FIRE...

IS IT BLOOD-BOLING FLAMES SWIRLING THRU THE ROOM AS HE BURNS LIKE A TORCH...

...AND A FEW MINUTES LATER, ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THE MONSTER... IS A HOUND OF ASHES...

YOU MURDERED HIM!



I WARNED YOU THAT WOULD HAPPEN... AND YOU DELIBERATELY KILLED HIM! YOU'RE A MURDERER, CARL BARKIN!

BUT I—I THOUGHT THIS WAS JUST A DREAM... A NIGHTMARE!

SEIZE HIM BEFORE HE DESTROYS MORE OF US!

SO, I—I WOULD PROMISE) HERE, YOU CAN HAVE THE REST OF THE SCRIPT!

IT ISN'T SAFE TO LEAVE YOU NOW THAT YOU'VE ATTAINED THE SKILL TO CREATE LIVING CHARACTERS IN YOUR WRITING, TOO. YOU MUST COME WITH US... TO THE WORLD OF BEYOND!

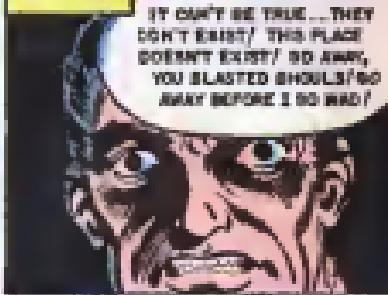
HOW HO! DON'T TAKE ME AWAY... PLEASE DON'T!



CARL'S PLEASE DIE AWAY AS THE ROOM SUDDENLY FILLED WITH A MYSTERIOUS GREEN MIST... AND THE SMELL OF DEATH! THE MACABRE POPULATION DISOLVES IN THE POTRED SMOKE AND CARL FEELS HIMSELF FALLING THRU A VORTEX LINED WITH A SWARM OF HORRIFIC FACES...



IN 11 MINUTES... OR HOURS... OR A THOUSAND YEARS LATER WHEN CARL OPENS HIS EYES AGAINST TERROR AND FEAR PARALYZE HIS VOICE AND BODY... ONLY HIS THOUGHTS FUNCTION... BUT HE FORGELS IF HE'S DANE AS HE STARES AT THE BEAT BEFORE HIM...



FACING CARL IS A FANTASTIC CORPSE OF HORROR/FEVERY PROFOUND HOMEROSTASY THAT EVER STALKED THROUGH THE PAGES OF LITERATURE. STARE AT THE MAN WHO DARED TO HORDE ONE OF THEIR METRO KNUCKLE. CARL WORES A MENTAL BILL-BOARD OF THE FRENDS HE PRODUCED! THERE'S COLOSSO, THE JUMPER OF HOMIC DARE... AND SPAZIA... AND FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER... AND CYCLOPS... AND KYON KONG... AND MEDUSA... AND DR. Jekyll AND MR. HYDE... AND MARY, MARY MORE...



TAKE HIM TO THE DUNGEON WHERE
THE OTHER OFFENDER WAITED!
AFTER THE FUNERAL OF THE
ONE HE MURDERED WE SHALL
GIVE THEM BOTH A TRIAL!

YOU CAN'T DO
THIS TO ME!
YOU MONSTROUSSES
DON'T EXIST!

YOU'RE ONLY
HORROR STORY
CHARACTERS.
YOU'RE FICTION
... YOU'RE
NOT REAL!

WE WERE BORN IN THE MINDS OF
GREAT MEN... AND WE EXIST NOW
AND WE SHALL EXIST WHEN YOU
LIE ROTTING IN YOUR GRAVE!
THE GREAT WRITERS WHO
CREATED US PRESERVED US FOR
ALL ETERNITY BY PRESERVING
THEIR CRIMINAL MANUSCRIPTS.



YOU TOO COULD HAVE BEEN
CREAT, CARL. BASED... BUT YOU
DIDN'T BELIEVE IN THE CHAR-
ACTERS YOU CREATED! YOU
EVEN MURDERED ONE OF THEM
... AND YOU SHALL PAY THE
PENALTY! TAKE HIM AWAY!

IN HERE, MURDERER...
WITH GLORELL STONE...
ANOTHER OF
YOUR KIDS?

YOU
BLASTED
FAIRIES
WON'T GET AWAY
WITH THIS! I'LL
GET YOU... ALL
OF YOU!

IT'S USELESS TO FIGHT THEM! I
FOUNDED THAT OUT AFTER I TOOK
UP A PAGE OF A HORROR SCRIPT I
WRITTED... AND MURDERED THE
MONSTER I
CREATED ON THAT PAGE!

I HAVE AN IDEA
TO ESCAPE THIS
HELL! HAVE YOU
GOT A PENCIL?



After Gloria hands Carl a pencil,
Carl takes out a notebook he always carries
with him for ideas, and begins to write in it...

IF THAT'S A MESSAGE
ASKED FOR HELP...
HOW ARE YOU GOING
TO GET IT OUT OF
HERE AND INTO
OUR WORLD?

IT ISN'T A MESSAGE!
IT'S A STORY... A
HORROR STORY WITH
CHARACTERS THAT
LIVE!



... AND AS CARL WRITES, THE SPITEOUS CHARACTERS HE
CREATED, MATERIALIZE IN THE DUNGEON AND GATHER
AROUND THEIR CREATOR...

YOU MUST BE INSANE TO
CREATE MORE OF THESE
FIENDS AFTER WHAT
THEY'VE DONE TO US!

THERE... THE STORY IS
FINISHED! AND I BELIEVE IT
OR NOT, GLORIA... THESE
LOATHSOME OFFSPRING OF
MY IMAGINATION ARE GOING
TO GET US OUT OF HERE
... OR DIE!



QUICKLY, CARL TAKES OUT A CIGARETTE LIGHTER AND
HITS THREE SPARKS A FLAME / THEN HE HOLDS THE
NOTEBOOK, ON WHICH THE STORY IS WRITTEN, OVER THE
FIRE AND KILLS...

YOU'LL ALL DIE IF I SET FIRE TO THIS
STORY IN WHICH YOU WERE BORN! TELL
MONSTER MASTER OF THIS HORROR
HOW TO RELEASE US... OR
YOU'LL ALL BURN!

NO! DON'T
KILL US! /
PLEASE! /
WE'LL DO
ANYTHING
YOU ASK! / WE
WILL TELL
HIM TO SET
YOU FREE!

AND... ALL RIGHT, CARL BACON... YOU WIN!
WE PROMISE TO SEND YOU BACK TO
YOUR OWN HOMES IN THE UPPER WORLD! AND
YOU MUST PROMISE NEVER
TO DESTROY ANOTHER
ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

YEAR... YEAR...
WE PROMISE! HOW
GET US OUT OF HERE
... AND HURRY!

THE MONSTER MASTER BURNED A SWIRLING
GREEN TORNADO FROM THE DEEPEST PIT OF HADES...
AND IT SNATCHED CARL AND GLORIA AND SPED
THEM UPWARD THRU THE SAME HORROR-FADED
FUNNEL...



MEMORIES AND A DICKEN'S STENCH ARE ALL THAT'S
LEFT TO REMIND CARL OF HIS FEARFUL JOURNEY INTO
THE MONSTER WORLD WHEN HE COMES TO IN HIS ROOM...

WAS IT A NIGHTMARE? OR—OR DID IT
ACTUALLY HAPPEN? I—I DON'T KNOW
—BUT I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE ANY
CHANCES!



I'LL DESTROY EVERY ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT
I DREW! THAT'LL KILL EVERY MONSTER I
EVER CREATED... THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES
WHO CAN COME AFTER ME! I'LL BURN 'EM
... I'LL RIP 'EM TO PIECES...



AND DEEP IN THE BOWELS OF ETERNITY, THE HORRIFIC
CHILDREN OF CARL BACON'S IMAGINATION SWOON AND
SQUEAM IN ANGUISH AS CARL BURNS HIS MASS MURDER
OF THE MONSTERS...





FOR EVERY PAGE CARL BACON BURNS... A MONSTER ALSO BURNS...



I'LL DESTROY THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT PAGE AS SOON AS I TYPE THEM AND KEEP A CARBON COPY, THAT WAY I'LL SET RID OF THE MONSTERS AS SOON AS I CREATE THEM!



FOR EVERY PAGE HE CRUSHES... A MONSTER IS ALSO CRUSHED...



FOR EVERY PAGE HE TEARS INTO PIECES... A MONSTER IS ALSO TORN TO PIECES...



AND I'LL WRITE A HORROR NOVEL ABOUT MY EXPERIENCES IN THE MONSTER WORLD! IT'LL BE A BEST SELLER! NOTHING LIKE IT HAS EVER BEEN DONE BEFORE!



CARL WORKS DAY AND NIGHT ON HIS NOVEL/HE RELIVES EVERY TORTUROUS EMOTION... AND HE SCREAMS WITH DELIGHT AS HE THROWS EACH FINISHED PAGE OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT INTO THE FIRE AND CREATES EVERY MONSTER HE CREATES...

BURN YOU BLASTED DEMONS! BURN! HA/HA!



...AFTER A MONTH OF BURNING AND DESTROYING, CARL FEELS THE LAST PAGE OF HIS ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT TO THE FLAMES... AND ALSO THE LAST MONSTER...

...AND NOW TO TAKE THIS CARBON COPY MANUSCRIPT TO MY PUBLISHER AND COLLECT A BIG, JUICY ADVANCE! HA! SOMEONE'S KNOCKING ON THE DOOR... IT MAY BE HIM LOOKING FOR ME!



I CAME TO TELL YOU THE GOOD NEWS. I WROTE A NOVEL ABOUT THE MONSTER WORLD... AND A PUBLISHER BOUGHT IT. HERE'S THE MANUSCRIPT.

LET ME SEE IT!

BE CAREFUL, CARL... THAT'S THE ORIGINAL AND THE ONLY COPY I HAVE.

BUT THIS IS ALMOST LIKE MY NOVEL. WE BOTH CAN'T TELL THE SAME STORY!

SO YOUNG, GOES INTO THE FIRE!

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, CARL... STOP! DON'T DO THAT!



BUT ELSPETH'S WARNING IS TOO LATE! THE MANUSCRIPT IS SWALLOWED UP BY THE FLAMES... AND AT THE SAME INSTANT, CARL, EXPLODES INTO A HUMAN TORCH...

HEY! WHAT THE...?
OWW-W-W-W!
HELP! HELP!



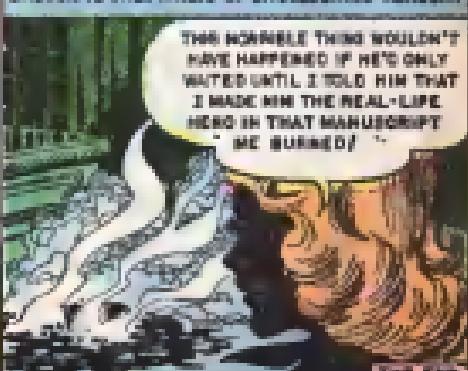
IT'S ME, CARL... ELSPETH STONE... THE WRITER WHO WAS WITH YOU IN THE MONSTER WORLD!

YEAR, SO WHAT?



CARL, INCINERATED AND TURNED INTO PAIN... BUT HIS BURNING ALL HELPED ME! AND THE BURNING, CARL BARON IS ONLY A HEAP OF SMOKING ASHES...

THIS HONORABLE THING WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED IF HE ONLY WAITED UNTIL I TOLD HIM THAT I MADE HIM THE REAL-LIFE HERO IN THAT MANUSCRIPT — ME BURNED!



BAFFLING MYSTERIES

403

A SWORD DATING BACK TO THE NAPOLEONIC WARS, HANDED IN A PARIS MUSEUM, IT IS THE OBJECT OF ONE OF THE STRANGEST INCIDENTS EVER RELATED. THE OWNER OF THE SWORD, A FRENCH HERO UNDER NAPOLEON, DISAPPEARED IN ACTION DURING A CAMPAIGN IN 1815 WITHOUT A TRACE OF HIM OR THE SWORD EVER BEING FOUND.

In 1914, the great-grandson of the French hero deserted France on a new battlefield in another war.

MON LIEUTENANT--
THE HUNS ARE SURROUNDING US!
WHAT IS OUR NEXT MOVE?

WE MUST
RETREAT--WE
WILL DIE IF WE
REMAIN HERE!



NO ONE
COULD
UNDERSTAND
THE TERROR
IN THE
LIEUTENANT'S
HEART,
BUT AS HE
PONDERED
THE
COMARADE
ACTION
HE
WAS
ABOUT
TO
TAKE

WHI...I--IT
CAN'T BE--THE
GHOST OF MY
GREAT-GRAND-
FATHER!!

TAKE HEART, LAD. YOU
ARE NO COWARD--I HEREBY
TAKE MY SWORD AND LEAD
YOUR MEN BRAVELY!



WHEN THE BATTLE HAD BEEN,
THE LIEUTENANT WAS FOUND
DEAD ON THE FIELD STILL
CLUTCHING THE SWORD.

HE FOUGHT LIKE
A TIGER AND DIED
LIKE A HERO.

YES, BUT WHERE DID
HE GET THAT SWORD? IT WAS
LOST WITH HIS GREAT-GRAND-
FATHER DURING THE NAPO-
LEONIC WARS IN 1815!



BUT WE CANNOT RETREAT--
THIS OUTPOST IS VITAL. IF WE
LOSE IT UP, THE ENTIRE
DIVISION WILL BE
SLAUGHTERED!

THOSE ARE MY
ORDERS, SERGEANT!
TELL THE MEN WE
WILL FULFILL OUT IN
TWENTY MINUTES!



WITH NEW-FOUND COURAGE AND THE SWORD,
THE LIEUTENANT RALLIED HIS SOLDIERS TO
THE OFFENSIVE.

FORWARD, MEN!
VICTORY OR DEATH!

THE HUNS
ARE FALLING
BACK! THE
LIEUTENANT
HAS SAVED
THE DAY!



HOW THE SWORD CAME
INTO THE POSSESSION OF
THE YOUNG LIEUTENANT
AFTER YEARS OF BEING
LOST, PRESENTED A BATTALION
MYSTERY. IT IS BELIEVED BY
STUDENTS OF THE SECRET
THAT THE SWORD RETURNED TO
BRING VICTORY AND HONOR
TO ITS NAME. THE AWESOME
SWORD STILL HANGS
IN THE MUSEUM TO TESTIFY
TO THE WEIRD POWERS OF
THE STRANGE AND
SUPERNATURAL.

THEY STRANGLE BY NIGHT

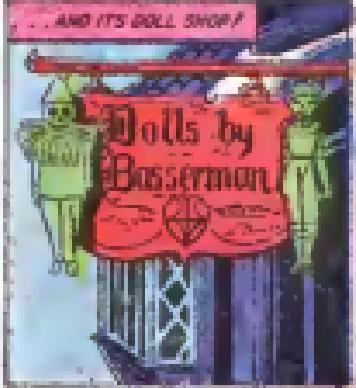


I AM SICK AND TIRED OF FOLKS WHO SCOFF AT THE SUPERNATURAL. DO THEY WANT SWORN AFFIDATOONS SIGNED BY SPECTERS? DO THEY WANT VAMPIRES OR THE MYTHICAL STAMPS? I FOLKSTLE GET NOTHING LIKE THAT HERE. WHAT FOLLOWS IS MERELY THE FAIR ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED IN DONNERHALD IN 1927.

DONNERHALD LAY IN A VALLEY. IT WAS A PEACEFUL TOWN, WORLD-FAMOUS FOR ITS BEER...



...AND ITS DOLL SHOP.



THE DOLLS OF MANS BASSERMAN
WERE WEIRD, PROFOUNDLY PEOPLE
SHAPED... BUT PEOPLE BOUNTY

MADAM IS RIGHT... MY DOLLS ARE
NOT MEANT FOR CHILDREN. THEY
ARE WORKS OF ART, CARVED WITH
INFINITE CARE, BASED ON
DESIGNS THAT HAVE BEEN
WITH MY FAMILY FOR
CENTURIES...

I WILL
TAKE
IT!



...BUT I CAN'T LET YOU MARRY
GRETCHEN. TH- THERE'S NO DEFINITE
REASON, NOTHING I CAN PUT MY FINGER
ON... ONLY THE STRANGE STORIES ABOUT
YOUR DEAD FATHER, AND THOSE DOLLS
YOU MAKE IN YOUR SHOP... I-E COULD I
NOT BEAR HAVING MY GRETCHEN LIVE IN
THAT PLACE, IN THE SHADOW OF
THOSE THINGS...



FOR LOVEHORN, THAT NIGHT, RAN BACK
AND FORTH IN THE DARK SHADOWS OF
HIS DOLL SHOP...

I-I DIDN'T WANT THIS
TO HAPPEN... I TRIED TO
LIVE LIKE A NORMAL MAN...
I TRIED TO FORGET
EVERYTHING MY FATHER
TAUGHT ME... BUT
NOW... NOW...



ONLY FOR GRETCHEN WOULD
MANS CARVE A "PRETTY DOLL"...

MANS, YOU ARE
NOT HALF AS
BEAUTIFUL AS
YOU
WILL LOOK AT OUR
WEDDING, LIEBEMAN.
WILL YOUR FATHER BE
AT HOME TONIGHT?
I WILL ASK HIM
NOW...



MR. BASSERMAN...

SIR, I HAVE COME AGAIN
TO ARRANGE THE WEDDING
DATE. BOTH GRETCHEN
AND I ARE VERY EAGER.
I HOPE THIS TIME
THERE WILL BE NO
MORE DELAY.

I HATE TO
SAY THIS,
MANS...



...AS MANS WALKED BACK TOWNS SHOT HIS FINGER CANNES
LUDWIG INNOCENT, FORMING TWO JABBED PIST...

THE OLD MAN
HAS ALWAYS
HATED ME!



MANS BREATHED HOARSELY AS HE FILLED THE GAULDRON
WITH BOTTLED WATER. HE MOAED AS HE DROVED HIS
FATHER'S POSE. HE SIGHED AS HE POURED IN THE POW-
DERLESS POWDERS...

DOLLS OF HATRED, SPECTRES
OF STRIFE... MAKE MY DOLLS
MOVE... BRING THEM TO LIFE!





THE DOLLS ARE BACK ON THE SHELVES
INSIDE MY SHOP. I WILL NEVER CALL
THEM TO LIFE AGAIN. NO ONE WILL
EVER KNOW . . .

GRETCHEN'S FATHER
HAS BEEN A POPULAR
MAN. HIS FUNERAL
WAS WELL ATTENDED.

A MONTH WENT BY . . .

SOON NOW,
HANS, YOU
WILL MARRY
GRETCHEN...
RIGHT?

SHE IS STILL
IN MOURNING.
WE MUST WAIT
A YEAR AT
LEAST.

BUT THEN
THE MOON
WAS FULL
AGAIN . . .

AND HANS WAS
AMAZED BY HOW
LIFE SOUNDS INSIDE
HIS SHOP!

BUT I DO
NOT CALL YOU
TO LIFE!
HANS, YOU NEVER
TO CALL US WHEN
THE MOON WAS FULL!

ONCE A MONTH FROM
HOW TO ETERNITY WE
SHALL COME TO LIFE,
AND SPEND THE
NIGHT KILLING!—!

NO . . . IT
CAN'T BE!



STOP! I AM YOUR
MASTER!
STOP . . . !



YOU ARE WRONG, HANS DABBERMAN!
WHEN THE MOON IS FULL, WE ARE
OUR OWN MASTERS.

THE DOLLS ROAMED THE DARK STREETS
OF SOMMERTHAL UNTIL...



IN A SPLIT SECOND,
THAT MAN WAS GOLDA
-SODDEN!



IN ANOTHER SPLIT SECOND, HE WAS
DEAD!



AND WHEN DANNY CAME, THE DOLLS WERE BACK ON THE
SHELVES INSIDE THE SHOP...

HANS, T-YOU'RE SO PALE!
AND YOUR HAIR HAS TURNED
WHITE! W-WHAT IS WRONG,
DEAR HANS?...

I- I HAVE BEEN SICK
LATELY, GRETCHEN. MY
STOMACH, MY NERVES
—NOTHING ELSE...



HANS, I CAN TELL... YOU NEED ME! I
WILL NOT WAIT FOR THE TIME OF
MOURNING TO END! I
WILL MARRY YOU NOW!

GRETCHEN
...I DO...
MY DEAR
GRETCHEN...



HANS, WHAT
ARE YOU GOING
TO DO?

ALL THE DOLLS... I WILL
DESTROY ALL THE DOLLS—
SMASH THEM TO PIECES!
THEN OUR LIFE TOGETHER
WILL BE FRESH,
CLEAN...



NO, HANS... THEY
ARE TOO BEAUTIFUL!
STOP!





DO THEY BRAINED ME? FROM THE BANNED AND SHOTCHERED JUNG... .

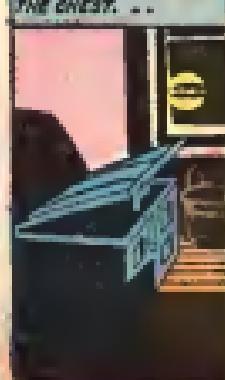


...BUT I BRAINED ONE OF THE DOLLS. THE LITTLE GIRL DOLL HE MADE FOR ME JUST BEFORE MY FATHER DIED. IT WAS TOO BEAUTIFUL. TO LET HIM SMASH...



...HE TUPCHED HIS THE DOLL IN A CHEST-- AND FOR A MONTH ONE AND HASS WERE HAPPY TOGETHER...

...BUT WHEN THE MOON WAS FULL AGAIN... A TOTTY HAND SLOWLY LIFTED THE COVER OF THE CHEST...



...A SHADOWY FIGURE CLIMBED STUPIDLY OUT...



...WALKED STUPIDLY ACROSS THE FLOOR...



THEN IT CAME TO THE BED
WHERE BRITCHEN LAY
SLEEPING.

AEEEEEE!



BY THE TIME HANS' EYES SLICED
OPEN, IT WAS TOO LATE! HIS
BRIDE WAS ALREADY DEAD!



CHASED WITH BRIEF AND FUR,
HANS CHASED THE DOLL ACROSS
THE WIDTH OF THE VALLEY, UP A
STEEP MOUNTAIN PATH--UP, UP...
TILL, AT LAST, FOR A BRIEF MOMENTS
HIS HAND GRASPED THE TINY SILKEN
DRESS!

HOW I--



BUT THEN...

AEEEEEEEEE!



THE DOLL HAD LED HANS OVER A PRECIPICE...

AND AS HE LAY DYING, HE HEARD THE
DOLL'S MOONS LAUGHED AS IT FLEW
ABOUT IN THE LIGHT OF THE FULL MOON.



HOW DO I KNOW ALL
THIS HAPPENED? I
AM THE LAST
DEATH DOLL OF
GODHERWALD! I
FREQUENTLY PRONOUNCED, MY
EYES A HEAVENLY
BLUE, MY MOUTH
SWEATING SWEETLY,
A SIT ON A DOLL
SHOP SHELF, I DO
NOT KNOW THE NAME
OF THIS CITY...



ALL I KNOW IS... ONCE A MONTH...
THE MOON IS FULL...

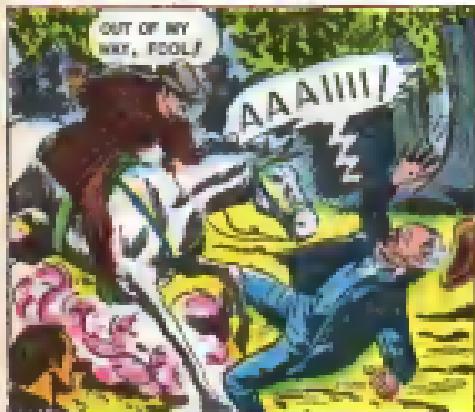


THE END

BAFFLING MYSTERIES

CONT.

AN OFT-TELL TALE OF THE SUPERNATURAL FOOL PLACE IN A SMALL BALKAN COUNTRY IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY. AND PRINCE MINDO, A HEARTLESS MAN OF HOBILITY, RACED HIS HORSE DOWN A BOLD THOROUGHFARE NEEDLESS OF THE PEOPLE WALKING THERE. SUDDENLY HIS HORSE CHARGED DOWN ON AN AGED MAN...



MINDO
PASSED
AND PRINCE
MINDO COULD
NOT FORGET
THE DEAD
MAN'S CHASE
THAT, ONE
MORNING.

AN
EERIE
VOICE
CALLED
TO HIM
FROM
OUTSIDE
THE
SHADOW...

THE SHARP HORSE TRAMPLED THE OLD MAN TO DEATH BUT WITH HIS LAST BREATH HE UTTERED A CURSE...



THE UNDERTAKER RETURNED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS UNTIL PRINCE MINDO, DRIVEN INSANE BY THE HORSE, HIT HIS FORMER HORSE AGAIN...



MINDO ENTERED THE VEHICLE AND WITH A SWISH OF THE UNDERTAKER'S WHIP, THE HORSES PULLING THE HEARSE WERE OFF WITH THEM AND PASSENGER ABOARD...

MY REVENGE IS COMPLETE!
I AM TAKING YOU ON AN ETERNAL TRIP TO HADES!



THE TOWNSPEOPLE
WERE AWAKENED FROM
THEIR SLEEP BY THE
HORRIBLE SCREAMS
AND THE CLATTER OF
THE HEARSE RACING
OVER THE COUNTRY-
SIDE. AND PRINCE
MINDO HAS NEVER BEEN
AGAIN OUT TO THAT
CITY. THE VILLAGERS
SAY THAT WHEN
THE MOON IS FULL
THEY SEE THE HEARSE
GLITTERING THROUGH
THE TOWN, AND THE
ANGUISHED SCREAMS
OF THE DAMNED PRINCE
GOING FROM IT.
ANOTHER STRANGE SIGHT
IN THE SPLENDOR OF THE
SUPERNATURAL.

WILLIS DURCAZY'S FEATS AS A MAGICIAN WERE LEGENDARY. HE HAD RUMMED WITH THE IMMORTALS OF MAGIC UNTIL TIME'S DREAD HAND HAD AGED HIM, PLACED WRINKLES IN THE ONCE YOUTHFUL FACE AND MADE HIS FINGERS FLEXIBLE. YET DURCAZY WOULD NOT SUBMIT TO THE UNEVITABLE SIGNS OF DEATH. HE FOUND A WAY TO A GLORIOUS COMEBACK. HE WOULD STOP AT NOTHING TO SHOCK AT HOME, EVEN IF IT MEANT TRIPPING IN THE BLACK ARTS... WITH THE PRINCE OF MAGICIANS.

CONJURER FOUL FIEND

for the



LET GO OF ME!
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT
AN EVIL APPARITION!
I COMMAND YOU TO
UNCOIL AND DISAPPEAR
TO THE HELL YOU
CAME FROM!

YOUR MAGIC POWERS ARE
AT AN END, WILLIS DURCAZY!
I AM MASTER HERE! NOW
YOU MUST JOIN MY
UNDERWORLD FRATERNITY
OF MAGICIANS!

A FEW YEARS AGO, ALMOST TO THE DAY, IN A CHEAP THEATRE
IN LONDON AGAIN WILLIS DURCAZY TRIED DESPERATELY TO
HOLD A BOYISH AUDIENCE...

IF YOU WILL BE
STILL A MOMENT,
I WILL TRY THE
GREATEST OF
CARD TRICKS
AGAIN!

THAT MUST
HAVE BEEN A
HUNDRED
YEARS OLD!

TAKE THE
OLD FAKER
AWAY!

YAAA, GIVE 'EM A
GAG! WE CAN'T
EVEN STAND UP
ANY MORE!

AFTER REPEATED FAILURES, THE THEATRE
FILLED WITH SHOUTS OF DISBELIEF UNTIL
THE MANAGER BROUGHT THE CURTAIN DOWN...

GIVE ME ANOTHER
CHANCE, MR. REEDER! I
T'LL DO SOME TRICKS
THAT WILL BRING THIS
HOUSE DOWN!

IF I OPEN THE
CURTAIN, THEY'LL
TEAR THE THEATRE
APART! WHY
DON'T YOU FACE
IT? YOU'RE FINISHED,
WEEFED UP, TOO
OLD!

FOR WEEKS DURCAZY HAUNTED LONDON'S BOOKING AGENTS. BUT EACH TIME . . .

BUT YOU KNOW MY ABILITIES, MR WALSH? I PLAYED THE BIGGEST THEATRES FOR YEARS!

THAT WAS THIRTY YEARS AGO! I CAN'T BOOK YOU ANY PLACE! AFTER THAT LAST PERFORMANCE YOU GAVE, I'D ONLY MAKE A LAUGHING STOCK OF MYSELF!



FINALLY THE ADVERTISING BUDGET AND FINANCIAL WORRIES DROVE DURCAZY TO DESPAIR.

I'LL SHOW THE WHOLE SWISH LOT THEY CAN'T TREAT ME LIKE DIRT! PERHAPS, THIS FOOL . . . DARED TO BREAK MY CONTRACT, TRAMPLE MY NAME IN THE HUGO? I'LL SEE HIM AT THE BOX OFFICE TONIGHT!



POLICE! HELP! HELP! DURCAZY! NO... DURCAZY... AARRGH!

I TOLD YOU TO BE QUIET! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT AN OLD MAN CAN DO!



IT—IT WAS DURCAZY, THE MAGICIAN! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY! DURCAZY! EVERYTHING IS GOING BLACK!



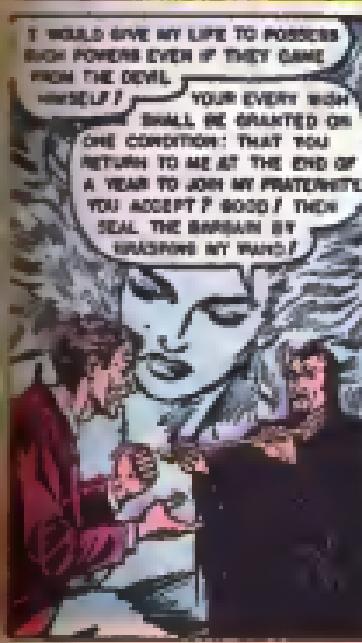
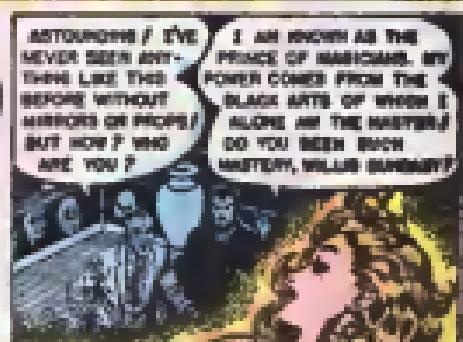
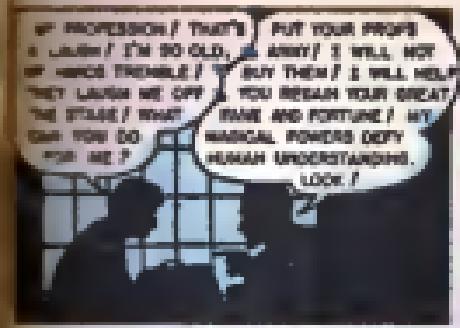
THEY'RE . . . (PANT)... PARISH ME! BUT I WON'T BE SAFE UNTIL I LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THERE'S A LITTLE THEATRICAL SHOP I KNOW THAT WILL BUY MY MAGIC EQUIPMENT WITHOUT ASKING QUESTIONS! THE MONEY WILL HELP ME ESCAPE!



COME IN, MR DURCAZY! I'M SURE I CAN HELP YOU! THERE IS NO NEED TO RUN AWAY AND GIVE UP YOUR GREAT PROFESSION!



HOW DO YOU KNOW ME? I NEVER MET YOU BEFORE IN MY LIFE!



I DO NOT BURN. THANKS / MY REWARD
WILL COME LATER / BUT REMEMBER,
YOU MUST RETURN TO ME AT THE END
OF THE YEAR / ZELDA GOES WITH YOU
AS YOUR ASSISTANT!

GONE, WILLIS,
TIME IS SHORT / NAME WHO
FORTUNE DANT YOU!

SATANIC LAUGHTER ECHOED FROM
THE STRANGE SHOP AS DUNCASAY
AND ZELDA LEFT...

IS HE
NOTHING, WILLIS?
I HEAR THAT
DEMON'S HEAD IS
LAUGHING...
HOCKING ME!
WHAT DOES IT
MEAN, ZELDA?

DUNCASAY NOW PRESENTED
HIMSELF AS DOCTOR MARD,
CREATOR OF MARACLES, TO
THE STRANGE THEATRICAL
AGENTS...

MAGICIANS AND
TUPPENCE A DOZEN THESE
DAYS / OR MIND, WHAT IS SO
STARTLING AND FRESH ABOUT
YOUR ACT? / WHAT CAN YOU DO
TO SET THE PUBLIC ON FIRE?

I'LL SHOW YOU, MR.
PROTEUS / IF IT'S FIRE
YOU WANT BURNED, I'LL
BUILD THE FIRST ONE
RIGHT HERE!

A WAVE OF DUNCASAY'S HAND, AND...

YEAH! STOP IT / PUT IT
OUT! YOU'LL RUIN MY
DESK AND THOSE CON-
TRACTS! I DIDN'T
MEAN THIS KIND
OF FIRE!

TO GIVE YOU A BETTER
VIEW OF THE TRICK,
PERHAPS SOME LUMI-
NATION IS NEEDED /
SO... ALLEZ — OOF!

YOU'VE CONVINCED ME, MR. MARD.
YOU'LL BE BOOKED INTO THE LARGEST
THEATRES IN THE COUNTRY! JUST
LET ME DOWN AND PUT OUT
THOSE FLAMES!



AT CHIE, MR. PROTEUS!

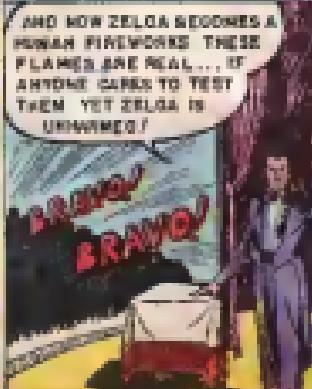
— WHAT STRANGE
POWERS I POSSESS! A GESTURE, A MERE
THOUGHT, AND THE ACT IS DONE! I
CANNOT EVEN PREDICT HOW!

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THERE'S
NOT A SIGN THAT ANYTHING HAS
BURNED AND I SAW THE FLAMES!

THAT WAS ONLY A SMALL
PREVIEW OF MY MAGICAL
GIFTS / JUST WAIT TILL
I OPEN MY SHOW!

ON OPENING NIGHT AT THE PALACE, DUNCASAY
HELD HIS AUDIENCE SPELLBOUND.

AND HOW ZELDA BECOMES A
HUMAN FIREWORKS THESE
FLAMES ARE REAL... IF
ANYONE CARES TO TEST
THEM, YET ZELDA IS
UNARMED!



EACH NEW PERFORMANCE WAS A THRILLING TOUR DE FORCE AND A TRIUMPH FOR DONCASTER.

THE ASTOUNDING
INDIAN ROSE TRICKY!
ZELDA IS VANISHING
INTO THEM AND!

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN! THERE IS
ONLY ONE GIRL DAYDREAMS HERE!



I AM NOW JUGGLING THIRTEEN
OBJECTS WITH MY EYES
COMPLETELY BLINFOLDED!

HALF AS THE WORLD'S GREATEST
SHOWMAN, DONCASTER HAD TO FIGHT OFF
MANY ADMIRERS

JUST ONE
MORE PICTURE,
OR MURK?

I'VE STARED THROUGH
THREE PERFORMANCES TO
GET YOUR AUTOGRAPH!
PLEASE, OH HERO!

I CAN'T SEE ANYONE ELSE! PLEASE
SET EACH! I'M VERY TIRED!

BUT AS HE TURNED FROM THE ACCLAMING FANS,
SUDDEDLY...

AAARRR, WHERE DID THIS
MONSTROUS THING COME FROM?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?



I'VE COME TO REMIND YOU OF THE PLEDGE
YOU MADE! YOUR TIME IS RUNNING OUT,
DONCASTER! YOU MUST RETURN TO THE PRINCE!

THE GIRL'S
HEAD... IT'S
SOME! IT
SPOKE OF
RETURNING
TO THE
PRINCE?
WHAT DOES
IT MEAN?

IT MUST BE YOUR
CONSCIENCE BOTHERING
YOU! YOU PROMISED
TO RETURN TO THE
SHOP IN ONE YEAR.
THE TIME WILL BE
UP TOMORROW!

BEFORE THE NEXT EVERYTHING
PERFORMANCE...

ZELDA, LISTEN TO ME! I'VE
WAITED A WHOLE YEAR TO TELL
THEY! I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU!
I WANT TO MARRY YOU AND
LEAVE THE STAGE! I DON'T WANT
TO RETURN TO THE PRINCE!



AS ZELDA STRUGGLED...

I HAVE RETURNED
BECAUSE YOU BROKE
THE PACT WE MADE!
LET ZELDA GO!
SHE DOES NOT
BELONG TO YOU!

YOU LIE!
I WILL NOT
GIVE HER
UP AND I
SHIT UPON
THE PROMISE
I MADE!



INSTANTLY, A DREAD TRANSFORMATION OCCURRED...

YOU FRIEND LET ME GO AGAIN! RELEASE ME! I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY!

I WON'T SUBMIT TO YOU! YOU'RE ONLY AN UGLY PHANTOM OF THE MIND, AN APPARITION!

I WARN YOU, DUNCAZY! DO NOT RAISE YOUR HAND AGAINST YOUR MASTER!

DO NOT TEST MY POWERS, DUNCAZY! IT IS DANGEROUS TO TOY WITH ME!

AT DUNCAZY'S STRIDE WITH LASSO FOLK...

WRETCHED WEARING! I LEAVE YOU NOW AS I FOUND YOU! BUT SOON YOU WILL COME TO ME!

YAAAHAAA

CRASH!

DUNCAZY WAS UNAWARE OF THE TRANSFORMATION THAT HAD TAKEN PLACE...

MY SIGNAL! I MUST GO ON! I WILL GO ON, ALONE, AND PROVE THAT DUNCAZY IS STILL THE WORLD'S GREATEST MAGICIAN!

BRUUU



AT EACH PUNISHING EFFORT THE AUDIENCE ENCHERED, THEN LONG JEERING RESOUNDED...

NOW I COMMAND THIS TABLE TO BEND / RISE, I SAY! OR MIRD HAS SPORN!

HE'S A FRAUD! THERE'S NOT DR. HERO!

BOOOOO!

WE WANT OUR MONEY BACK!



AND DEAFENING WOULD THE CURTAIN HAD RUN DOWN...

HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! THAT ISN'T DR. HERO! IT'S DUNCAZY THE OLD MAGICIAN WHO MURDERED RENSHAW!

THAT'S HIM ALL RIGHT! GRAB HIM, HER! DON'T LET THE KILLER GET AWAY THIS TIME!



MY LUNGS...ARE GOING TO BURST! I CAN'T RUN ANYMORE! I MUST FIND A PLACE TO HIDE!



AS HE ROUNDED THE NEAT CORNER, DESPERATELY
SEEKING AN AVENUE OF ESCAPE . . .

ZELDA! HELP ME!
THERE'S A MAD MOB
AT MY HEELS!

I'M HERE SOONLY! THE
PRINCE WANTS YOU! ONLY
HE CAN GIVE YOU!

WIGG
MASK
COST

Inside . . .

DO YOU'VE COME BACK? FINALLY
KEPT OUR FAITH? COME, THE
BROTHERS OF YOUR NOBLE FRATERNITY ARE
EASIER TO MEET THE GREAT DUNCAZ!

W—WHAT ARE
YOU GOING TO DO
WITH ME?

DUNCAZ HAS LED THROUGH SHOCKING BRONZETONE
TO A SCENE OF UNEARTHLY HORROR . . .

THERE ARE YOUR BROTHERS, DUNCAZ! ALL WHO SOUGHT
MAGICAL POWERS THROUGH MY BLACK ARTS! LOOK, A NEW
MEMBER HAS BEEN ADDED! THIS IS MY BEST TRICK! I CALL
IT THE LOOP OF DAMNATION! HA HA HA!

I DO NOT WANT
TO JOIN THEM!

COME DUNCAZ, STRUGGLE IN
UNLUCK! TAKE ME AWAY, SLAVE!

NO! NO! DON'T TOUCH
ME! YOUR HANDS BURN!

THEY WERE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO
GAMBLE IN THE BLACK ARTS! HOW
COULD THEY EXPECT TO MATCH
TRICKS WITH AN OLD HAND LIKE
ME? I'VE BEEN AROUND SINCE
THE WORLD BEGAN!

THE THIRD VISITATION

It was by the merest chance that I found the book. For a whole year — ever since I returned to Malvern House — I had desperately avoided the library, though a half-hour's work would have easily passed the needful dozen. But on this night, the night of my twenty-second birthday, the strange appeal which those closed doors had always exerted on me grew appallingly strong and I jumped out of my sleepless bed and hastened downstairs. As I passed the grandfather clock on the landing, I noticed that it was a half-hour after midnight.

It was one o'clock when I passed the doors and stood upon the threshold.

I hardly dared move inside. It was as if I were hearing again my father's stern words, that afternoon eleven years ago when he caught me in the library.

"I don't know how you continued to enter without a key," he cried, his face white with anger, "but if ever again you enter this room, I — I —" His lips trembled, his voice answered with rage, and I, poor tyke of ten that I was, squirmed out of his grasp and fled, never hearing the end of his sentence.

I never heard him speak again, for that reason; for that night, at his desk in the library, he suddenly passed away, his hands clutching at his throat.

I never really knew my father. We had never been companions, or pals, as whatever boys and their fathers are supposed to be. I remember him vaguely as a lonely, quiet man — tall, serious of countenance and, surprisingly for a man of only forty, with a shock of pure, snow-white hair. His pictures show him blackbearded, and that's how I think I remember him; but I'm certain that on that particular day, when he grasped me so fiercely, his hair was snow-white.

The books in his library — so the story went — were, according to the instructions in his will, supposed to be burned. But the executors, evidently thinking it a sick man's phobia, circumvented the order and compensated by sealing the library. The house too was closed while — until I was twenty-one — I went on live with an aunt, my mother's sister. My mother had died when I was two, and my aunt had long wanted me to live with her, doting — as to I've heard — that my father was too "persecuted" to bring up a child.

And now I was in the library — the library from which I was so foolishly routed, the library in which my father had so suddenly died. It was no different from a thousand other libraries — high-ceilinged, oak-paneled, with tiers of books that lined the walls from baseboard to rafter.

I had not browsed long among them when I noted a shocking thing: The books, written in many languages, dealt almost exclusively with the mysteries of the occult. With mesmerism and white magic and alchemy and ancient and medieval magic. I steadily turned the pages of some half-dozen volumes, wondering what my father had to do with these strange studies, and then, passing over a book, I came across the book — the diary of my father.

The entries were in a neat, meticulous hand, but now and again there were passages in which the long-headed, uneven strokes showed a high pitch of excitement. Which was surprising, because my father was a most controlled man. And as I read, a deep sadness seized me and I was tempted a dozen times to hurl the diary away, to burn it, to destroy the whole library — but I was powerless to act and, chilled and fearful, I found I could not stop reading.

All the pages were filled with detailed notes on the experiments — impure, futile experiments — that my father had carried on to bring back my mother . . . my father's wife, who had died so sadly, so young.

And then, on page seventy-four, as the first fingers of dawn were poking through the window, I found the excited, scrawled words: "At last I have it! I have it!"

And immediately, my fingers trembling, my blood suddenly ice, I snatched the book, but not before I saw that the next paragraph was written in Latin.

Shaken, I returned the diary to its place, vowing never to open it again, and hurried upstairs, passing for the balm of restful sleep.

But I slept fitfully and was up at noon. And though I dutifully averted my eyes from the library all day, when darkness closed in, I found I could fight off the call of the library on longer.

I found the diary, opened it to the right page, and slowly spelled out the Latin, pictures my father had so laboriously entered.

I cannot say I willed what I did next, nor can I say I did not will it. But, the translated words before me, I went through the steps, one by one, of my father's painstaking experiment. I drew on when chalk the circle, and written at the periphery. I turned off the lights and at each corner of the pentagram I placed a candle. In a drawer of the desk I found — untouched these many years — two envelopes with Latin inscriptions, and from each I sprinkled a little powder in the appropriate spots in the pentagram. It was now well past two o'clock.

Upon the stroke of three, as it signed in the diary

— the candle flickering, the chalkmarks glowing in yellow ghost-light — I crossed the words underlined in the Latin text.

And then I sat back and waited.

The candle-hungry ghostly, I could hear the sighing of the wind outside, and then I heard a soft faint whisper, a whisper that was like the rustling of the finest silk. And a soft wisp, like the faintest of smoke signals, appeared to the center of the pentagram and, like a Shryvilk smearing, a figure, ghostly and soft and seen as through a cloud, stood before me.

In life I had not known her, but I had seen her pictures often. The lady before me was my mother. My father's expression had worked!

I cried to her, I would have her talk. But she stood just so, exceeding, wondrous, beautiful — and real. And just as I thought she was about to speak, the fire wailed about her . . . and she was gone. And the candle flickered out and I sat in darkness, remembering the text and the visitation lasted but a minute.

I don't know how I found my room, or the bed, or how I lived through the next day. But when night closed in again, I hurried again to the library.

This time I went through the diary more carefully. Many, many pages later, I encountered another paragraph in Latin. This was a more complex experiment, and the visitation, I noted, lasted for five minutes. Though the incarnation and the steps leading to the creation of the figure were more complicated than the first coming, I set about it with mingled repulsion and apprehension.

By three o'clock all was in darkness. The candle flickered, the chalkmarks glowed dimly, suspended from the ceiling was a canine tooth — buried in another envelope on the desk — and a strange-smelling powder burned with acid edge. And after the incantation, I waited.

Again the figure of my mother appeared. This time I knew she would talk. But after five minutes, and the notes, she would be gone, and — The nail was broken off in a fissured scroll I could not decipher. What, I wondered, had happened. But my imagination could not even surmise.

The notes, as I said, had indicated she had talked. But minutes passed and there was no sound. She merely stood, swaying, in all her red but waxy loveliness, and she must have known I was by her, for after a while she held out arms, as if summing me. And then, just as I was about to give my heart of knowing her speak, I saw her lips move and I heard words. But I did not know what she said, for with

her first words an incredible, an impossible transformation began to take place.

Her features — how shall I say it? — melted. Like the earth in a landslide, the flesh began to disintegrate, and it was as if I were seeing, in a fast-action film, the processes of decay that take place over many years.

I don't know if I screamed, if I cried out. I think I was powerless to move, to utter a sound. I could not take my eyes away and yet I could not bear to see further. And then, as it is known to my peasant, the five minutes were up and the vision was gone.

Enough, I told myself, was enough. But the devil himself must have prompted me, for the next night I was in the library again, passing over the third Latin entry . . . the last. It was the night of the third visitation that my father had died. Would I die, too? And then I saw the words that could terminate a visitation. They had not worked for my father, I reasoned. Or had he, indeed, invoked them?

With trepidation I carried through the experiment. At the strain of these I began the incantation. My voice trembled, I sat furtively. And as my words died away, the wisp of fire appeared and presently my mother materialized before me — as lovely, as beautiful, as alive as she must have been in life. And this time, I knew, she would stay as long as I wanted — as long as life itself. The metamorphosis of the previous night, I concluded, must have been my imagination.

She stood there, silent and smiling and beautiful, and when the last five minutes were almost up, she began to speak. But with her first words, a terrible chill seized me. For again the disintegration of flesh was taking place. The bloom was gone from her cheeks, the flesh began to wither, and from her shoulders and arms the visible life was ebbing away. Her garments as images became thin. They began to hang like a shroud; and as she answered talking, the first faint impression of her skeletal contour showed itself. This, I knew, was what my father had seen. This was what was to be with me forever . . . and still the disintegration continued.

I don't know how I found my voice, but suddenly it rose from me, shrill, bone-filled, with the words my father had pronounced: "Fili mortuorum . . . Vnde ad te regas?" And I fainted.

When I awoke, I was alone in the room, and all the chalkmarks were gone, and all else. And as I passed the moment, to find the diary in the fireplace I saw, with a shock of horror, that my hair — like my father's — had suddenly turned snow-white.

THE WEREWOLF STRIKES!



WHO CAN SAY WHAT MONSTROUS
FACtS EXIST BEYOND THE
BORDERS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE?
WHO COULD BELIEVE THAT A
LUMINESCENT CREATURE BEA-
ING THE MARK OF A BEAST AND
CALLED IN TRIBULATION TO THEE,
A MONSTER COULD ACTU-
ALLY DRIVE THE PEACEFUL, BET-
TERED ON A GRIEF-HAUNTED ISLAND
TO FLEE? TO FLEE BLOOD-
MURDER AND HABEN UNTO
THE SHADOWS OF THE BLACK
NIGHT, ONLY TO REAPPEAR
AND STRIKE AGAINST HUM-
ANS? WHETHER OF YOU
COULD CALL THIS MONSTER
MADNESS OR THAT TOR-
TUE CALLS FOR A FIGHT FOR
A HOME, YOU ARENT DUFF ONE
OF THEM TO TELL YOU THIS
STORY...

IN A CERTAIN DARK AND THREDDYED NIGHT
IN THE EAKAL HUNTERLAND FIELDS MILL-OF-
PARADE, THE WOLF HAD SICKNESS CLOP
TO BRIGHT AS THE FANGSHENG BRIGHT
MONSTROUSLY BENTON IN EAKAL WOLF DOOM...

WHAT ABOUT ONE
MORE GLASS
BEFORE WE
CALL IT A
NIGHT, EH,
JOHNNY?

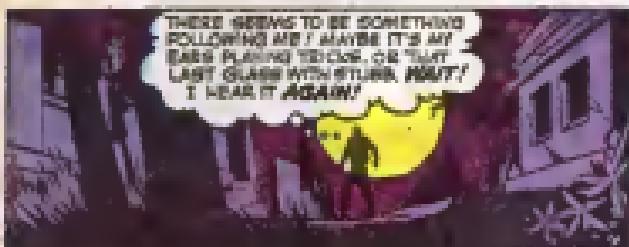
I WOULDN'T HAVE YOU
THINK ME A POOR GROD
STUB, BUT IT'S BEST I
GET STARTED FOR ME
FATHER'S FARM. IT'S
THE BETTER PART OF
AN HOUR'S WALK
FROM HERE!

ATE, JOHNNY! AND WING YOU DONT
TAKE THE SHORT-CUT THROUGH THE
OLD CEMETERY. IT'S NOT THE
PEOPLE WOULD FOR A LYING
MAN TO PRAK
AMONGST
THE DEAD!

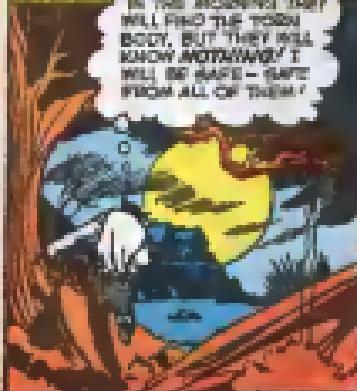
DON'T FEAR FOR
ME, HATE PITY
THE POOR MAN
OR WRETCH WHO
WOULD FIGHT A
FIGHT WITH
JOHNNY FLEAS!



TWENTY MINUTES LATER, THE HOUND FOLDED BACK FROM A SWIMMING AMONGST RAINFOREST, AS A FISH SWIM AT COASTLINE UNTHREATENED ACROSS THE CORALINE. THE COMPETITION IS TIGHT, BUT IT IS UNFAIR.



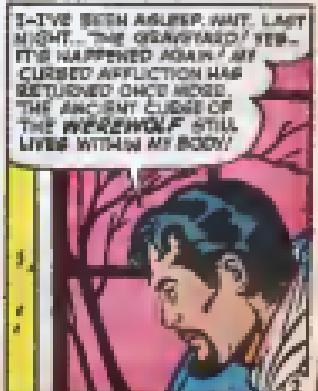
AT THE FROZEN DEATH COYOTE HOLLOW
THROUGH THE BLAIN MOUNTAINS TRAVERSE
THE AROMATIC FOREST CEDAR BARK, WITH A
ROSE, ANNUAL, COTTONWOOD, TRAIL CLOVER,
LYCOPERSIC, AND MULBERRY.
LATER APPROACHED A CEDAR-THREE
WOOD IN A LONG, STRETCH OF
WOODS.



THEY WOULD HIRE ME
FOR ME NEEDS / AM / AM /
THE SIMPLE PEOPLE DARE
NOT EVEN THINK THAT A
CABBAGE SUCH AS I CAN
REALLY EAT... THAT'S
GIVE THE POWER TO
CREATE THEIR LIVING
FLESH WITH A SPURRI
BLOW! BUT NOW I
MUST SLEEP... SLEEP...



WITH THE COMING OF DARK,
THE FROG IN THE ADOBE
STRUCK AS THE MARCH
ABOUT ARRIVED BEFORE THE
SHRINE GATE, SO TOO THE
MAGICAL FEATURES OF THE
BEAST UNCLAWED THERE
HOLD WITH THE COMING OF
A NEW DAY...



FIVE YEARS I'VE DEVOLVED MY BODY AS A
SCIENTIST, HOPING TO DISCOVER THE
SERUM THAT WOULD RID MY BODY OF
THIS MONSTROUS FLESH - BUT
THE FAILS!



PERHAPS THERE IS STILL TIME! IF I CAN ONLY FIND
SOME YOUNG SCIENTIST TO HELP ME, SOMEONE
WHO WOULDN'T SUSPECT - MAYBE THEN THESE
HANDS CAN BE KEPT AS THEY ARE, NO LONGER
TO CHANGE INTO CLAWS WHICH BREAK OUT
THE THROBBING THROTS OF MEN!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, A YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED
STOOD BEFORE THE SCIENTIST'S DOOR, WHILE A
MAGNETIC FIELD RAGED DANGEROUSLY AMONGST
THE RUSTED EQUIPMENT OF THE SURROUNDING ROOMS...

I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS
OF IT, JOEL. BECAUSE IT'S
SO CLOSE TO THE COM-
TERY WHERE THAT
HORRIBLE CRIME
TOOK PLACE!

YOU'RE BECOMING
ALARMED OVER
NOTHINGS, DALE.
WE PROBABLY HAD
THE LONGEST SHOT
SO HE COULD
HAVE PROTECTED



LOOK, MONEY - IF A FAMOUS EUROPEAN
SCIENTIST LIKE PROFESSOR CARLO IS
WILLING TO HAVE ME AS HIS ASSISTANT,
I SHOULD BE THE LAST ONE TO COMPLAIN
AND WHAT'S MORE, A JOB MEANS
WE CAN BE MARRIED SOON!



A FEW MOMENTS LATER...

HE SELECTED YOUR LETTER
OUT OF ALL THOSE I RECEIVED.
MR. CARLO, BECAUSE OF
YOUR BACKGROUND IN EX-
PERIMENTAL RESEARCH.
HOWEVER, UNTIL OUR WORK
IS COMPUTED, IT WILL BE
NECESSARY THAT YOU STAY
HERE IN THIS HOME!

STAY
HERE!

I REALIZE HOW DIFFICULT IT WILL BE
FOR HIM TO BE PARTED FROM SO
CHARMING AND BEAUTIFUL A
WOMAN, BUT THEN, THIS CAN
BE HIS LAST CHANCE!

HE'S
RIGHT,
DALE.

ALL RIGHT,
JOEL. YOU'LL
COME AND
SEE ME WHEN
YOU CAN!



DURING THE DAYS THAT
FOLLOWED, JOEL
WENT TO AN AGRICULTURE
LABORATORY WITH THE
STRICT ORDER THAT HE
MIGHT NOT ENTER THE
PROFESSOR'S ROOM UN-
LESS HE WAS CALLED.
ONE NIGHT, JUST THAT
MOMENT...

THESE COMPOUNDS ARE
THE STRANGEST -
THAT HOUSE? IT
CAME FROM THE
PROFESSOR'S
LAB!



PROFESSOR DRAGO! ADD POTIONS!
YOU ALL EXHALE
I'M HAVING
JOEL, A RACK
OF TUNES
FELL OFF
THE TABLE
GO BACK TO YOUR
POKE!



JUST BEFORE THE GATES WERE
ABOUT TO BEAT ITS BLACKEST, A LONG
RAILROAD WAGON CHARGED A FREIGHT
CAR AT A SUMMATE SPEED. THEN,
SUDDENLY...



THE CRY WAS ATTRACTED
THE RAILROAD POLICE.
I MUST GET AWAY!



THE GATE WAS SUDDENLY ARRIVED MADE JOEL FEAR
RUNNED TO THE PROFESSOR'S LABORATORY
BY AN URGENT CALL...

WHAT, PROFESSOR DRAGO?
WHAT ARM? IT'S
ALREADY!

NOTHING SERIOUS, JOEL.
I CUT IT ON ONE OF
THOSE BENCHES TURNED
YOU'LL FIND A FIRST AID
KIT IN THE TOP DRAWER
OF MY TABLE.



“I HAVE THAT BATH RIGHT FROM AS JOHN HAS STOOD AT PROOF ON A NEW BATCH OF CLOTHESPIN, THE DOOR OF THE LABORATORY WAS SUDDENLY THROWN OPEN...

“WHAT, GAIL! WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE HERE?”

“I HAD TO COME, JOEL. I'M THREE BLUES PAINSTINED.”



“WHEN I LEFT EUROPE TO COME TO AMERICA, ONE OF MY MAIN REASONS WAS TO ESCAPE THESE ANCIENT SUPERSTITIONS. AS A MAN OF SCIENCE, I HOPE THAT HERE THEY DON'T EXIST. COME NOW, YOU CAN'T REALLY BELIEVE A STORY OF A MAN TURNING INTO A WOLF!”



“IN THAT CASE, I WILL WALK WITH YOU AS FAR AS THE PARK. AT THE EDGE OF TOWN, YOU WILL BE PERFECTLY SAFE. I ASSURE YOU.”



“THERE'S BEEN ANOTHERS OF THOSE AWFUL SLAUGHTERS, AND I CAN'T STAND YOUR BEING IN SUCH A LONELY, UN-SECURED SPOT. THE INSPECTORS SAY THAT A WITNESS HAS DESCRIBED THE SLAYER AS BEING SOME KIND OF ‘WOLMAN’? IS IT ALL TOO HORRIBLE?”



“I AGREE WITH JOHN COMPLETELY. THIS STORY IS A SHAMEFUL ABUSE OF SCIENTIFIC FACT. THERE'S NOT A GRAIN OF TRUTH TO IT.”



“DO THAT, GAIL. I PROMISE I'LL BE OVER TO SEE YOU TONIGHT, AS SOON AS I FINISH RE-FINING THIS LAST BATCH OF LIQUID.”

“ALL RIGHT, JOEL. I'LL GO!”

“THAT'S MORE LIKE IT, MY DEAR! HOW IT WOULD BE BETTER THAT YOU MIGHT ON HOME. JOEL HAS SOME IMPORTANT WORK.”



“A FEW LATER, JOHN'S HORSES WERE DROPPED OVER AGAIN BY AN IRREPRESSIBLE INSPECTOR ON THE FRONT DOOR. JOHN, SWIFTLY, HAD FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR, AND...

“THE INSPECTOR, PROFESSOR DRAGO HE CAME TO ME AT THE MOMENT. I'M HIS ASSISTANT, JOEL CARLTON. PERHAPS I CAN HELP YOU?”



IN THE DARK, MY FRIEND, I'VE HAD
A POLICE OFFICER, INSPECTOR
COAST GUARD, AND BUSINESSMAN, AS
WELL AS MY INVESTIGATOR...

I DON'T GO MUCH FOR THESE PRESS-
WOLF STORIES, BUT A BALLOON
POLICEMAN INQUIRED THE ATTACKER
LAST NIGHT. HE USED CODE, AND
CALL SIGN - WOLFMAN. AND THEY
TRAILED THE BLOOD
SPOOK TO TIME
MOUSE!

IF YOU SAY HE
WAS WOUNDED
AND LAST NIGHT IN
HIS LAB, I SUSPECT
A BAD CUT ON
PROFESSOR
DRAGON'S ARM!
BUT IT CAN'T BE!

COME ON, MAN—
THAT'S ALL I
WANTED TO
HEAR! I'VE BEEN
TAKING A LOOK
IN THAT LAB!



IN A MATTER OF MINUTES THE CLOCKWISE
TIME PROGRESSIVE DOOR WAS SPRUNG
AND IMMEDIATELY LATER THE INSPECTOR
DREW A GUN OF DISCOVERY...

LOOK! THIS BOOK
DEALS WITH ANCIENT
GOOGOOGO, AND
THERE'S A MASSIVE
HERE ON A SECTION
DEALING WITH MYSTIC
MAGICK! IT LOOKS
LIKE THE PROFESSOR
GOOG IN HIS OWN
MIGHTY STRANGER
READING!

GREAT
HEAVENLY!
ALL OF
THESE
BOOKS
DEAL WITH
SOME FORM
OF THE
BLACK
ARTS?



HE LEFT THIS HOUSE
OVER ONE HOUR AGO
WITH MY FIANCÉE. HE
WAS TO WALK HER TO
THE PALM AT THE
EDGE OF TOWN.
WE'VE GOT TO
DO SOMETHING!



BUT A MOMENT LATER, AS A
SILVER BEAM OF MOON
LIGHT FILTERED FAVORITELY...

THE CRUSHED MOONLIGHT! THE
LIGHT BURST INTO MY
BEAN ONCE MORE!



AND AT THE SAME MOMENT IN A HEADY SWELL,
A PALE
MOON RING STRUCK AND THENCE THREATENING
CLOUDS AS THE INSPECTOR'S HORROR ROSE AN
HYPNOTIC PATTERN OF SYNTACTIC SOUND!

YOU ARE NOT IN LOVE WITH JOEL, MY DEAR.
YOU HAVE BEEN IN LOVE WITH ME FROM THE
FIRST MOMENT WE MET. I HAVE THE POWER
TO DO SOOOO MUCH FOR YOU.
YOU WILL FORGET JOEL
YOU HEAR AND BELIEVE
EVERYTHING I SAY.
DON'T FEAR.



YES... I
HEAR... I
HEAR... AND
I BELIEVE...



THEY'VE COME AFTER ME! BUT THEY WON'T
ROB ME OF MY VICTORY! I'LL CALL HIM OFF!

THOSE
ME DOGGER—
INTO THE
OLD RUIN
TODAY!

WE'VE GOT
TO FOLLOW
HIM, BEFORE
IT'S TOO
LATE!



HE'S PUT ME DOWN! I DON'T
CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO ME,
BUT I'VE GOT TO
SAVE DALE!

FOR SEVERAL MOMENTS
JOEL PUT UP A DESPERATE
FIGHT, LOSING FIGHT SLOWLY
TILL HE WAS TORN, CLAWED
THROWING ABOUT HIS
MUSCLES BURST, KILLED
BLOODY.

A- [o] o [o] o [o]

AS JOEL AND GAN DESCENDED TO THE
FLOOR END ON, AN UNCONTROLLABLE
AND SWALLOWING SWELL MET THEIR
FATE.

IT'S ULTERY FANTASTIC! BUT
HOW I CAN UNDERSTAND HIS
WICKEDY—THOSE STRANGE
COMPOUNDS I WORKED WITH
HE WAS PROBABLY SERVING
A MEANS TO HIS CURE
OF HIS AFFLCTION, AND
NOW HE'S FOUND
RELEASE AT LAST—
IN DEATH!



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